CARROLL COUNTY TIMES

Westminster Rescue Mission finds new location for women's recovery house

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The Westminster Rescue Mission has found a new location for its planned addiction recovery house for women and their children.

The new location is 35 N. Tannery Road in Westminster. The new site comes after neighbors voiced objections in 2023 to the previous proposed location at 327 Crowl Road in Westminster.

"We have found a property," Stephanie Halley, chief executive officer for the Westminster Rescue Mission said at a meeting of the Board of Carroll County Commissioners Thursday. "We've gone through all of the inspections. It's gone well."

Commissioners voted unanimously to hold a public hearing Jan. 16, to allow input on the new proposed location. The 11.59-acre property includes a 2,525-square-foot house built in 1975.

Both District 4 Commissioner Michael Guerin and District 3 Commissioner Tom Gordon III expressed support for the new location.

“County road, a lot of property, a wooded area, nicely done,” Guerin said.

“It looks like a really nice property at 11.59 acres,” Gordon said. “You’ve got five bedrooms, three baths. I did look it up. It’s a very nice property.”

Commissioners on April 13, 2023, approved the Westminster Rescue Mission’s grant application for the house on Crowl Road. But people living in the neighborhood expressed opposition to the recovery house being located there. Even with 10 acres surrounding the property, the Westminster Rescue Mission determined that it was no longer suitable.

Last January, the county was awarded a $1.75 million grant for a new location. The rescue mission spent the last year evaluating properties across the county.

“The [Tannery Road] property meets all zoning requirements and will be certified by the Carroll County Health Department,” a county briefing paper states. “The home has space to accommodate two to four women and their children as well as a house manager. Residents will be provided services and programming to support long-term stability and will be housed for up to two years.”

The Westminster Rescue Mission is a Christian-based nonprofit that has provided addiction-recovery services in Carroll County for 55 years.

“This location is close to the [rescue mission’s] main campus and provides about 11 acres of open land and outbuildings to support a robust garden and other outdoor activities for the residents,” the briefing paper states.

The new property is large enough to provide women a variety of activities to help with recovery.

“One of the ideas for this recovery housing was really to offer a space that had some grounds and some out buildings so that there can be some farming, teaching, instruction for folks while they’re in recovery,” Celene Steckel, director of the county’s Citizen Services said. “Also, a place for children that are there while their mother is in recovery.”

Neighbors living adjacent to the property are being notified about the project.

“They’re doing letters to neighbors, they’ve done telephone calls, and they want to make sure they have all the comments and the feedback from those neighbors, so they can educate them about how this property would service these individuals,” Steckel said.

Have a news tip? Contact Sherry Greenfield at sgreenfield@baltsun.com, 240-315-7029 and @sherrygreenfie9 on X.